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EVALUATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH CORPS PROJECTS. ABSTRACT.

NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH CORPS (DEPT. OF LABOR)
DUNLAP AND ASSOCIATES, INC.

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THIS SUMMARY OF DUNLAP AND ASSOCIATES' EVALUATION REPORT, PREPARED BY STAFF OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH CORPS (NYC), REFLECTS THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT. DATA WERE COLLECTED FROM QUESTIONNAIRES ADMINISTERED TO SAMPLES OF 789 TERMINATED AND 942 ACTIVE ENROLLEES IN 30 RANDOMLY CHOSEN RURAL AND URBAN, IN- AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL, AND SMALL AND LARGE NYC PROJECTS IN 22 STATES. NO EVIDENCE OF THE ENROLLMENT OF FINANCIAL INELIGIBLES WAS FOUND. NYC SPONSORS GENERALLY RECOGNIZED FORMS OF DEPRIVATION AND MALADJUSTMENT OTHER THAN EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AS ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA. ABOUT 30 PERCENT OF ALL ENROLLEES RECEIVED SOME FORM OF TESTING, AND 20 PERCENT OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL AND 6.4 PERCENT OF IN-SCHOOL ENROLLEES WERE PROVIDED REMEDIAL EDUCATION. ATTITUDES TOWARD WORK AND PERSONAL HYGIENE WERE THE SUBJECT AREAS REQUIRING MOST AND LEAST COUNSELING. NO CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE WAS DISCLOSED REGARDING THE EFFECT OF NYC PROGRAMS ON THE DROPOUT PROBLEM. THE PRINCIPLE REASONS FOR TERMINATIONS BY OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH WERE PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT AND RETURNS TO SCHOOL AND BY IN-SCHOOL YOUTH WERE PROGRAM CONTRACTION, GRADUATION, AND PRIVATE EMPLOYMENT. SPONSORS LIKED THE NYC BUT SUGGESTED AREAS WHICH NEED IMPROVEMENT. (ET)

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EVALUATION OF NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH CORPS PROJECTS

BY

DUNLAP AND ASSOCIATES, INC.

FEBRUARY, 1966

ABSTRACT

Prepared for:

Office of Economic Opportunity
Washington, D.C.

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Abstract of Dunlap and Associates, Inc., Evaluation Report on 30 NYC Projects 1/

I. General

This special evaluation was performed by Dunlap and Associates, Inc. during January under a contract (funded by OEO), costing about $32,000. It involved a total of 30 individual operations, 15 in-school and 15 out-of-school, although in three instances both the in-school and out-of-school components were under the sponsorship of a single agency. All projects were selected at random. The universe for the in-school projects included all in-school projects which had been in operation since early spring of 1965; and for the out-of-school projects, those out-of-school projects (with a few exceptions) which had been operating for a minimum of six months.

All seven of the NYC Regional areas and 22 States had representation in this group of 30 projects. Rural areas and urban areas of varying sizes were also represented, e.g., Pawhuska, Oklahoma; Boone, North Carolina New Haven, Connecticut; Englewood, New Jersey; Miami, Florida; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Cleveland, Ohio. Projects themselves ranged in size from approved enrollment of 1,000 to 1,500 in Miami, Philadelphia and Cleveland down to small in-school projects with approved enrollment of about 50 enrollees in Lewiston, Idaho and Suffern, New York. The in-school programs had been in operation about 10 to 11 months (more than one contract usually involved) and out-of-school programs about 9½ to 10½ months. Combined enrollment in all projects as of the dates they were surveyed was 10,089; cumulative, combined enrollment for all projects during the time they had been operating was 21,237.

II. Data Collected in the Survey

Data collection efforts in this survey had four major focuses:

A) To ascertain from a sample of active enrollees (in "enrolled" status at time of the survey) what they thought of the NYC program and how it was benefiting them. This information was obtained through a specially designed questionnaire which was administered to the enrollee sample.

B) To determine, on the basis of a random sample which included both terminated and active enrollees, the scope and extent of supportive services (counseling, special education, physical examinations, medical treatment, etc.) provided enrollees and

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1/ This summary of the Dunlap and Associates, Inc., Evaluation Report was prepared by staff of the Neighborhood Youth Corps. It reflects NYC's interpretation of the highlights of the report, not that of Dunlap and Associates, Inc. This distinction should be kept in mind by anyone who may have occasion to use this summary.

whether objective evidence of enrollees' progress after enrollment could be discerned (improvement in school grades and attendance, social and personal adjustment, attitude toward work, etc.).

C) To ascertain reasons for termination and post-enrollment status with respect to all cases of enrollee termination from the 30 projects prior to the survey.

D) To obtain to the extent possible various types of supplemental evaluative data and information, e.g., economic characteristics of the locality in which the projects operated, nature of the NYC project administration and management structure, community reaction to NYC, special problems encountered by sponsors in their NYC operations, sponsors suggestions for improving NYC, etc.

III. Summary of Findings

A. Median Enrollment Period of Enrollees

A little over four months in-school, and a little over three months out-of-school, (based on a sample of 942 in-school and 789 out-of-school enrollees).

The short median period seems surprising in view of the relatively long operations of these particular projects, but is probably explainable in terms of developments on eligibility, expansion in some summer projects and contraction of the FY '66 fall projects.

The median rises appreciably - to six months for in-school and four months for out-of-school - for enrollees on the payroll at time of survey (based on a sample of 331 active enrollees).

B. Characteristics of Enrollees

1. Economic Disadvantage - No evidence of the enrollment of financial ineligibles currently was discovered. It is noted, however, that project records reveal that there may not always have been compliance with present criteria in earlier months.

2. Educational and Cultural Deprivation - Sponsors generally recognize other forms of deprivation and maladjustment as additional eligibility criteria although in a few cases social and emotional problems were found to constitute reason for exclusion rather than inclusion.

3. Age - Six or seven of the 831 enrollee interviewees were found to be under 16. In-school and out-of-school projects alike were at fault in this matter. The report does not undertake to account for enrollment of these youth.

4. Delinquency and Conduct Records - Types known to have presented some kind of problems or who have been in some kind of trouble comprise a good share of NYC enrollment:

Fifteen percent of 942 in-school enrollees had some indication of misconduct in their records. This was generally a matter of behavior, tardiness or truancy, with little or no involvement of the police.

Twenty-five percent of 789 out-of-school enrollees had been involved in some form of delinquency or misconduct. This was often a serious matter, larceny, burglary, robbery, assault and disorderly conduct, most commonly, and in rare cases, such crimes as forgery and narcotics involvement.

Enrollee misconduct and delinquency records could not be fairly appraised on a before and after NYC basis because of different time lengths involved in each period.

C. Supportive Services

1. Extent of Supportive Programs

a. The only near universals for the 1,731 enrollee-sample were counseling and work supervision. The proportion of enrollees reportedly receiving these services ranged from 91 to 99 percent in both in-school and out-of-school programs.

b. About 30 percent of the enrollees in both in-school and out-of-school programs received some form of testing.

c. Twenty percent of the out-of-school enrollees and 6.4 percent of the in-school, were provided remedial education.

d. The number of enrollees who received medical, psychological, psychiatric and other special support was almost negligible.

2. Counseling

a. Major counseling subject-areas in both in-school and out-of-school programs and proportion of enrollees receiving counseling in each area were as follows:

Subject Area	Percent In-School	Percent Out-of-School
Attitude toward work	79	81
Vocational guidance	68	71
Personal and family problems	57	60
Budget management	47	47
Personal hygiene	41	43

b. Project people thought about 40 percent of the enrollees needed counseling beyond the routine, but only about 30 percent got it.

c. Special counseling needs on the in-school side involved mainly personal and family problems, work habits and attitudes and educational and vocational matters; and

on the out-of-school side, personal and family problems, personality and adjustment problems, future goals and work habits and attitudes.

d. Primary sources of counseling in in-school programs were school counselor, project director or assistant director and school principal or dean; and

NYC counselor, affiliated agency counselor, work supervisor and project director or assistant director, in out-of-school projects.

e. Only 14 percent of the cases needing special counseling were referred to special agencies, mainly health agencies, mental health agencies, vocational rehabilitation, special case services, etc.

D. Effect of NYC

1. Effect on dropout problem

The survey disclosed no conclusive evidence on this:

a. Only three in-school projects were able to provide any objective before and after NYC dropout information. Dropout rate in one case declined from 17 percent to 14 percent; from 2.3 percent to 1.8 percent in another; and from 1.56 percent to 1.24 percent, for a four-month period, in the third.

b. All in-school projects said they were getting some dropouts back in school, but no project had any figures or other pertinent information on the matter.

c. The effort to compare in-school enrollee grades and attendance on a before and after NYC basis proved unproductive, mainly because the NYC participation of many of the enrollees in the sample was too short to be meaningful for comparison purposes; and because differences in the way individual school systems maintained grade and attendance information often precluded before and after NYC comparison and comparison of the information across projects.

Survey findings which give rise to some uncertainty over NYC's role in helping to keep the potential dropout in school are: thirteen percent of 239 terminees from the in-school sample were known to have dropped out of school (this may not be the entire story, however, as this information was not furnished for 34 percent of the terminee cases); and, about 35 percent of 511 in-school enrollees, when asked, said that their chances of finishing high school were not really better after NYC than before.

2. <u>What happens to enrollees</u>

a. Main reasons for terminations (354 cases) in the out-of-school sample were: private employment (32.8 percent); and return to school (11.5 percent). (The percentage entering "private employment," based on the sample, is significantly higher than that obtaining for the universe of out-of-school terminees (3,355) which was shown to have only 21 percent as entering private employment. The proportion returning to school, on the other hand, was approximately the same in both the sample and the total group).

b. Main reasons for terminations (239 cases) from the in-school sample were. program contraction (23.4 percent); graduated from school (11.9 percent); and private employment (7.8 percent).

c. Reasons which are suggestive of maladjustment, poor work conditioning, etc., account for a substantial proportion of terminations in both in-school and out-of-school cases (about 18 and 20 percent, respectively).

d. Overall coordination between NYC and MDTA seems poor. Only 1.4 percent of the terminations from the out-of-school sample were to enter MDTA.

E. Enrollee Work Assignments

Two thousand twenty-one work assignments were reported for 1,731 enrollees, which reflects some rotation of enrollees to different jobs. Teacher aide and office or clerical aide accounted for about 40 percent of the in-school assignments, with custodial aide (23 percent), food service aide (about 8 percent), maintenance aide (about 7 percent), recreation aide (about 6 percent) and library aide (over 5 percent) accounting for practically all the rest.

Office or clerical aide (21 percent) is also a popular assignment for out-of-school enrollees, other common ones being outdoor maintenance aide (17 percent), building maintenance aide (nearly 16 percent), custodial aide (8 percent), recreation aide (nearly 8 percent), hospital or nurse aide (7 percent) and food service aide (about 6 percent).

The most common assignment in urban projects was office or clerical aide and outdoor maintenance aid in rural projects. Some assignments which were encountered only sporadically included cosmotology aide, engineering or surveyor aide, driver, carpenter, plumber or mason aides, seamstress, traffic checker, heavy equipment operator aide, morgue aide and meter maid.

F. How do Sponsors View NYC

All like it, but all have some "constructive" suggestions, or "complaints" if that terminology is preferred. Comments and suggestions cover a wide spectrum but specific categories most commonly mentioned by sponsors relate to:

1. Funding - Ten sponsors expressed dissatisfaction with such matters as delayed payments, uncertainty over project approval, insufficient advance information to permit sound program planning, etc.

2. Reports forms, and adhoc requests for information - Ten sponsors unhappy over this. Too many reports, too much paperwork, tell them once and for all what information they must furnish, don't make new reporting requirements retroactive, etc.

3. Eligibility Criteria - Nine sponsors say financial criteria should be flexible enough to accommodate local conditions.

4. Technical Aids - Eight sponsors would like help in such areas as accounting procedures, staffing standards, information on successful techniques and methods, etc.

5. Supportive Services - Seven sponsors see a need for funding of more supportive services, i.e., more counselors, medical and health services, remedial education, training of supervisors, etc.

6. NYC-Sponsor Communications - Seven sponsors want the procedures for communicating directives and other program information improved. One suggests that relationships between district directors and local directors be improved.

7. Other thoughts, comments and suggestions, isolated but interesting

Do you remove the needy to place the needier?

When new requirements are imposed, automatically amend contract to provide for them.

Include father's place of employment on Form 16.

Question applicability of six months for high school graduates.

Limit all programs to 200-500 enrollees so as to achieve personalized attention for each enrollee.

Cut hours per person so as to reach more enrollees.

Re-evaluate the six months rule with a view toward lengthening.

Put in writing; there are too many verbal agreements.

G. Miscellaneous

1. Most sponsors apparently feel they have a real problem in getting adequate on-the-job supervision of enrollees.

2. A dearth of regular employment opportunities was discovered in a few cases, raising the question of what will become of enrollees after enrollment.

3. Ten programs were found to have excellent records; 6, poor; and the remainder, adequate.

4. Only six projects were doing any real self-evaluation. All sponsors recognize the need for evaluation, but want guidance in how to do it and a line item in the budget to provide for it.

5. Proportion of project funds going to enrollee wages ranged from 57 percent to 92 percent. Average for all projects was 75 percent.

6. Seventy percent of the in-school and 66 percent of the out-of school enrollee samples reportedly showed improvement in attitude, work habits, motivation, etc., since NYC; degradation in these matters was reported for 7 percent of the in-school group and 9 percent of the out-of-school group.

7. State Employment Service was closely involved in operations of eight of the 15 out-of-school projects. ES services in the eight cases were rated as "satisfactory" to "excellent."

IV. How Enrollees View NYC (based on 831 enrollee interviews - 511 in-school and 320 out-of-school)

Overall reaction is quite favorable:

Ninety-five percent getting what they want from NYC.

Ninety-four percent satisfied with NYC.

Eighty-six percent in-school and eighty-nine percent out-of-school think NYC work helps community.

Eighty-four percent get along O.K. with supervisors.

Fifty-nine percent in-school and seventy-nine percent out-of-school agree they got guidance and counseling (eleven and thirteen percent, respectively, don't think it helped much).

Eighty-six percent in-school and eighty-nine percent out-of-school think they would be worse off without NYC (this is mainly a matter of just having a job and getting work experience for in-school and getting work experience and the opportunity for education for out-of-school).

Sixty-four percent think chances of finishing high school are better with NYC.

Less than one-half of one percent of in-school would like to drop out of school.

About twenty-five percent of the in-school enrollees said something was keeping them from continuing their education. This turned out to be money in eighty-four percent of these cases and family responsibilities in sixteen percent.

The major enrollee gripes are they don't get enough hours or money, and they are unhappy with the pay dates and system.

Major categories of expenses for in-school enrollees are clothing, schooling, food, entertainment and family; and clothing, food, schooling, family and entertainment for out-of-school enrollees.

V. Interesting NYC Comparisons on a Rural-Urban and In-School-Out-of-School Basis

Relatively more (almost double) rural enrollees than urban think they would be much worse off without NYC.

Fifty percent of the rural in-school compared to thirty-seven percent urban think chances of finishing school are much better after NYC than before.

Relatively more rural than urban in-school enrollees feel there is some obstacle to their completing school

Negroes were a small proportion of the rural enrollment - about fifteen percent to sixty-two percent white in in-school programs and about four percent to eighty-one percent white in out-of-school projects.

Substantially, more rural enrollees than urban value NYC for the educational opportunity it affords.

Urban enrollees value NYC more highly for work experience than do rural enrollees.

Rural enrollees feel a need for more guidance and counseling with personal problems than do urbans; relatively more of the latter than the former feel they need help with employment problems.

Food is a considerably more important item in the budgets of out-of-school enrollees than of in-school enrollees.